

Please hear my voice,

I have an amazing son his name is Ben and he is now 8, he has dyslexia. I knew something wasn't clicking with his reading and writing in year 1. When I kept asking the teachers what is going on. I was told don't worry he will come right. They recommended we get Ben assessed which we did and it cost \$650. We finally had the answers we had been looking for.

I thought like many parents we would give the teacher the report and they will help my son to read and they will know what to do and understand the report. Imagine my surprise when I find out they have never been taught how to teach a dyslexic child. They had no knowledge of decodable books and a explicit systematic approach to learning .

They kept teaching him balanced literacy over and over again in the hope it might work. Because that's what they know . What I know is it doesn't work . The only thing that changed was the smile from my son's face and the sparkle in his eyes.

Can you please try and imagine being a 5 year old boy trying desperately to learn but you can't. You don't understand what is going on and you don't understand why you can't get it like everyone else and why are they 10 reading levels higher than you . The teachers don't have the training or the knowledge to help him and he starts feeling helpless ,dumb, silly and worthless. He was 5 years old , no child should feel this way at school. Not when it can be avoided by implementing a systematic literacy approach. He still has anxiety and it gets worse each year as the work and expectations get harder.

So I ask you to look at these questions and see if you will answer them?

WHY are you not providing an education for all children?

WHY is it that 15-20% of children fail each year in literacy and this is acceptable?

WHY are you not listening to your MoE report by Massey University that confirms a systematic phonics approach is the way to go for all children in NZ.

WHY are you not listening to the rest of the world that has recognised Balanced Literacy is doing more harm than good?

WHY are New Zealand teachers not provided with professional learning opportunities that align with the current evidence practices and the Science of Reading?

WHY don't we supply resources for teachers that align with the current research and evidence to cater to all learning needs and ensure an inclusive education model?

WHY DON'T YOU CARE about my son and all the other kids that would benefit from a systematic phonics/literacy approach?

WHY DON'T YOU HELP they are just kids and you have the power to make change that will benefit all kids in New Zealand.

I also ask you to consider how much it costs me and other parents to educate our children.

I NEED to buy my son decodable books and workbooks which allow him to learn to read in a way he understands.

I NEED to go into school every Tuesday afternoon to teach my son a systematic phonics approach to teach him how to read and write.

I NEED to pay for a tutor , Speech language therapist and behaviour specialist to help my child to read and to survive in school because the education system in place sets him up to fail.

He shouldn't need to survive school he should be allowed to thrive in school and have fun like any other 8 year old boy or girl.

Please read your report from Massey University I can supply many more reports and evidence that shows a systemic learning approach works from all kids. Look at the UK, look at Australia more and more states are coming on board. Even the USA states are making big changes state to state.

Who ever is advising you they are giving you the wrong information I encourage you to research for your self and stop listening to the people that tell you we are educating all our children. Stats tell us nearly 50 % inmates can't read , We have a problem with more and more children seeking help under the mental health system. Our numbers are one of the worst in the world. How many of them do you think struggled at school I bet it will be more than 50 %.

If the MoE states that all children should be taught using a systematic phonics approach schools will follow regardless of self governing as they follow all the MoE recommendations now.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE HEAR US and make the right choice and create an education system for all kids and give them a richer, fuller education . All kids deserve the right to have a good education and to learn how to read and write. Isn't this why we send our kids to school in the first place?

Thank you for listening

Mum and advocate of Ben Scurr age 8

Sharon Scurr

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